



CALM BRIEFING PAPER 4/87

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) employs 1 420 people, and is committed to maintaining a well-motivated and competent workforce.

The range of skills and knowledge required by staff to achieve the Department's objectives is immense. Because many tasks require particular expertise which cannot be easily acquired outside the Department, it is important that CALM maximise its own human resources by providing relevant training for all personnel.

CALM's training program currently embraces the following activities:

1. CADETSHIPS (Certificate in Conservation and Land Management)

Two year cadetships are offered each year and cadets completing this course are eligible to apply for permanent posts as forest rangers, national park rangers and wildlife officers.

Although the minimum education qualification for the cadetship is the completion of Year 10, with good grades in Maths, English and Science, preference is given to candidates who have completed Year 12 (TEE) with strength in these subjects. Selection is based on careful appraisal of the application form, on interviews and on a period of five days' intensive selection for those candidates who have been short-listed after interview.

The first year of the cadetship consists of approximately 80% lectures in a wide range of land management and conservation oriented studies at the College of the South West, Bunbury. The second year is spent at the Department's Dwellingup Training Centre and consists of 70% practical work with supporting lecture programs.

2. UNIVERSITY TRAINING

The Department employs officers with a wide range of degree qualifications. Students who successfully complete appropriate University courses are eligible to be employed by the Department at Public Service salary scales as vacancies are advertised. Staff appointed to these vacancies are encouraged to take post-graduate studies.

The Public Service Board previously offered cadetships for courses leading to a Bachelor of Science (Forestry). These cadetships are no longer awarded.

3. TRAINEE RANGER SCHEME

A Trainee Ranger Scheme has been developed by the Department aimed specifically at preparing people for a career in national park management. Under the scheme, trainees undertake a two-part program which constitutes a formal certificated course in national park management.

Part A comprises academic units undertaken through TAFE and Part B will cover training and assessment in specific work skills conducted by the Department. The Trainee Ranger Scheme thus provides a combined work training and certificated academic course designed to thoroughly prepare new rangers for a complex role.

This scheme provides a second source of recruitment to national parks, the other being the Certificate in Conservation and Land Management.

4. IN-SERVICE TRAINING

A Training and Development Manual is produced annually as a reference for all personnel seeking to improve their performance and develop their careers. Other important mechanisms in the Department's training program are the Training and Career Development Committee, and the Department's Performance Appraisal System.

The function of the Training and Career Development Committee is to coordinate, evaluate and implement training programs, to prepare guidelines for staff recruitment, advise on training needs, provide a contact point for staff and a forum for discussion of training issues. The current membership of the Committee is Bob Cooper (Chairman and Manager, Personnel), Tony Brandis (Executive Officer), Ric Sneeuwjagt, Wayne Schmidt, Eric Jenkins, Kevin Vear and Kathy Andrews (Secretary).

The following is a list of in-service training options presently available:

A. Short Courses

- i) Technical Skills, eg. Silviculture, Environmental Protection, Fire Protection, Recreation and Landscape Planning, Supervisors' Training Course, Work Safety, Law Enforcement, Field Ecology, Coxswain's Certificate, Search Techniques, Driver Training.
- ii) Communication Skills, eg. Developing Effective Negotiating Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Correspondence and Report Writing.
- iii) Managerial Skills, eg. Leadership Effectiveness, Finance and Administration, Time Management.

- iv) Human Resource Management, eg. Interviewing Skills, Performance Coaching, Instructing, Training.
- v) Computing, eg. Computer Use, Computers as a Tool in Parks and Recreation.

All of these courses are facilitated by the Department's Personnel Branch. Many of these courses, particularly those in the technical skills category are implemented by Departmental staff. The remaining courses are available from external training organisations such as the Australian Institute of Management.

B. Higher Level Academic Courses

Information is supplied to staff about relevant part time courses, eg. Associate Diploma in Park Management; Associate Diploma in Environmental Science.

Staff may apply for study assistance to allow them to attend such courses in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Board Administrative Instruction 401.

C. Executive Director's Scholarship

The Executive Director offers a \$5,000 scholarship annually to a qualified employee to participate in the second year of a CALM field officer cadetship. The scholarship is open to all CALM employees who have had at least five years' of service, have the minimum academic qualifications, are medically fit and are well recommended by their District Manager. The scholarship allows experienced staff to participate in the cadet program without suffering economic hardship.

D. C E Lane Poole Memorial Trust Travel Award

The Lane Poole Award is made from a trust established as a tribute to the foresight of WA's first Conservator of Forests. Recipients of the award are given the opportunity to pursue any study, interstate or overseas, which benefits both the Department and the recipient.

E. CALM Alert

CALM Alert is a monthly cumulative list of the tables of contents of the latest journal issues which are held by the Departmental library. This document is circulated throughout the Department to assist staff to locate information for their professional needs.

F. Career Development through Transfer

Staff transfers are encouraged, particularly in the early stages of careers. This form of training is common practice in CALM and allows staff the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge in a wide range of Departmental activities.

5. SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

These are frequent and often run at District and Regional levels as well as State Headquarters, eg. Administration Officers' Seminar; District Managers' Seminar; Wildlife Officers' Seminar; Induction for Professional Officers; Training for Performance Appraisal Trainers.

6. TRAINEESHIPS

The Australian Traineeship System (ATS) was designed to provide eligible young people the opportunity of 12 months' structured on and off-the-job training. Traineeships incorporate both job-specific and job-transferrable work skills, aimed at making participants more competitive in the labour market.

Graduate trainees receive a certificate issued by the State Training Authority, a detailed certified Traineeship Record book and TAFE recognition of academic progress made during the off-the-job component of the traineeship.

The CALM Office/Clerical and Land Management traineeships were developed in mid 1985 and in early 1986, a total of 111 young people were welcomed into the Department in two intakes.

Of the 38 CALM Office/Clerical trainees who started in 1986, 29 graduated 12 months later, nine withdrew during the 12 months and 22 (combined total) have obtained employment to date. (Six with CALM).

Out of 73 CALM Land Management trainees, 48 graduated, 25 withdrew and 43 have obtained employment to date. (Eight with CALM). Six out of the twelve 1987 intake of cadets for the Certificate in Conservation and Land Management are ex-CALM trainees.

Currently CALM is participating in the Aboriginal Office/Clerical traineeship and is host to a trainee of this scheme in the Wildlife Protection Branch.

7. STAFF EXCHANGES AND FIELD VISITS

The Department has been examining and developing programs to improve relationships, communications, knowledge and to develop a sense of community in CALM.

Already some short-term exchanges and field visits are planned and these programs will be extended to other areas in the Department.

CALM's involvement in training and development is substantial and is continuing to expand. Many personnel in the Department are skilled and experienced in developing, managing and carrying out training programs.

The Policy Directorate has identified this area of Departmental activity as a high priority, which ensures that sufficient resources are available for this important aspect of human resource management.